

been disproportionately in low-wage occupations, as some in this House have claimed.

Specifically, according to the statistics from the Bureau of Labor Statistics Household Survey, between June 2003 and June 2004, 71.4 percent of the net increase in employment was in three relatively well-paid occupational categories: Management, professional and related occupations, that category comprised 23.1 percent of the job gains; construction and extraction occupations, that is, mining occupations, accounted for 36.1 percent; and installation, maintenance and repair occupations accounted for 12.2 percent.

The earnings in these occupational categories are higher than the median and much higher than the earnings of the typical low-income worker. Most of the workers in well-paid occupations have earnings in the middle range or higher.

These employment figures indicate that most of the new jobs are not at low wage levels, but at higher levels of earnings. We have been hearing assertions about "hamburger flippers," jobs dominating employment for about 20 years now. Those stories have not come true. It just is not happening. We are not about to become a Nation of hamburger flippers.

The data shows that most of the recent employment gains have been in relatively well paid occupations. This is good news for the American worker and is good news for the American family. It means that the low-paying job problem that accompanied the economic downturn which began in the last half of 2000, during the Clinton administration, has been rectified.

It further means that the economic policies of the current administration are working to bring pocketbook issues into a positive state.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

KNOWLEDGE IS POWER IN AMERICAN POLITICS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. McDERMOTT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, knowledge is power. That is the hope for America right now. That is the hope, that the American people will see what is happening in the people's House at the direction of the White House.

Democracy was subverted in a brazen manner here, and it is because of the administration that has a policy that States' ignorance is a virtue.

The President of the United States proudly says, "I don't read newspapers.

I don't read books, except for children's books when there is a photo-op possibility. I only take information that is pre-chewed by my staff and brought in to me and given to me." We will talk more about that later.

But the fact is the reason they want the PATRIOT Act is because as a part of this "ignorance is a virtue" policy, we have got to keep the American people ignorant. How can you do that? Keep them out of the libraries. We do not want them going into the libraries and reading books and finding out things that the President does not even know. What will happen if the people know more than the President?

So, the PATRIOT Act says, give the CIA and the FBI the ability to come into the library and see what you, the American people, are reading. What is going on here?

Now, this body came out here and took that power away. But it was suppressed. Democracy was suppressed in this body. After we restored the basic freedoms and civil liberties guaranteed by the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, we took away the people's right to read whatever they want without having the government snooping over their shoulder.

Democracy was censored after the American people's representatives had spoken loudly and clearly through their elected representatives, Democrats and Republicans. This was not just Democrats. The people told us to restore some of the basic freedoms and the civil liberties subverted by the PATRIOT Act. We did it out here on this floor.

But King George III did not want that. He wanted a different outcome. Democracy was subverted in a brazen display of raw political arrogance ordered by the administration and executed by the Republicans. America has never been so divided.

The Republican America is a place where the polls stay open until the Republicans win. Now, you have all voted in an election. You go to the polls and they close at 8 o'clock. You cannot come at 8:10 and say, "Hey, I want to vote." They are closed. It is over. You only can vote until then.

The Republican America is a place where the voice of the people is drowned out by the iron will of this administration. They did it right here on the floor. The Republican America is a place where fear is useful and greed is very, very good.

The Republican America is a place where democracy is endangered by an administration unwilling to accept the will of the American people.

Mr. Speaker, knowledge is power. The administration preordained the war in Iraq. They decided they were going to war. They manufactured reasons and they remanufactured responses as knowledge of the President's war choices began to reach the American people and turned out to be false.

The Senate Intelligence Committee has just put out a report which is just

the tip of the iceberg. They say the CIA gave bad information to the President. Remember, the President does not read anything himself. He does not read the newspapers, he does not read books. He lets people he trusts come in and tell him what has happened.

So, the CIA is at fault for why we are in Iraq. There is no other answer. Our President could not be at fault, because he took the word of people he trusted.

Now, the CIA is not without fault, but they are not solely to blame. What about the trips that Vice President CHENEY made out to Langley to the CIA headquarters, and twisted arms and said, "Can't you find some reason here why we can go into Iraq?" He did it five times, so that when the information came from the CIA to the President, who did not know anything else, he took what Mr. CHENEY squeezed out of the CIA. The process behind the intelligence was tainted. What did the administration know? What did they ignore, mischaracterize or discount, because it did not fit their agenda?

The checks and balances of this government were broken down by an administration that had a blank check from the Congress: "Go out and do anything you want on the war on terror." So they had the blank check in their pocket.

Then they had to have a clear intent for why they should invade Iraq, so they had to go to the CIA: "Give us a reason. Come on, give us a reason. There has got to be a reason. Come on."

The CIA is not without fault, but they are far from alone in leading us to war in Iraq. The administration will happily make them a scapegoat. Put it all on them and send them out in the wilderness. Blame George Tenet, blame all the analysts, public servants, all the public officials. Nothing at the White House. "We are blameless," they say.

I ask every American to compare what the administration will do in the next few days. On this weekend they are going to spin that idea all weekend. "We are blameless. We are blameless. The CIA is to blame."

Just compare that with what John Kennedy did after the Bay of Pigs. President Kennedy accepted responsibility. He had the CIA telling him things. He listened to them and he allowed it to happen, and he said "The buck stops at my desk. I made the decision. I was wrong."

Now, does anybody in this country believe that the President will admit that any mistakes have occurred in Iraq because of his decision making? Will this administration tell the American people that they should be held accountable for a needless war in Iraq?

Can you imagine the President coming on television and saying, "Well, we made some mistakes and I shouldn't have taken us into Iraq. The 1,000 people who have died were for naught."

John Kennedy accepted the blame. Will this President do that? The buck

stops at the White House with this bunch for only 116 more days.

WE MUST PROTECT OUR BORDER COMMUNITIES FROM DIRTY AIR AND UNFAIR SANCTIONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, we all know that pollution knows no boundaries. As much as we wish they could, the Border Patrol is not able to stop air pollution from coming over our international borders.

Right now, communities on our international border are being bombarded with pollutants from our neighboring countries. It is making air quality along the border even worse and leaves those communities with no recourse.

I introduced a bill, H.R. 4774, to provide Federal assistance to combat air pollution at the border, to ensure that our communities are not unfairly penalized.

Imperial County in my Southern California district, which takes up much of the U.S. Mexico border in the State, is severely impacted by air pollution because it sits in the middle of an air basin that straddles the international border with Mexico.

Mexico simply does not have the same strict air quality standards as does the United States. Imperial County has not met national and State air quality standards as a result, so any air pollution created in the international air basin has serious consequences for the health of my community's citizens.

I have deep concerns about a recent Federal Court ruling regarding the air quality of Imperial County and the subsequent actions on the part of the Environmental Protection Agency.

Imperial County has demonstrated to EPA that the county would have only moderate pollution were it not for serious air pollution from Mexicali, Mexico. EPA agreed. However, outside groups took EPA to court and they ruled in turn that Imperial County's air pollution should indeed be classified as serious.

This is a devastating ruling for Imperial County. Unemployment averages 20 to 30 percent. The ability to attract new employment opportunities will be greatly hindered. Economic development will be halted. Agricultural activities will not be able to begin.

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The chaos and expense to Imperial County will not address the real cause of nonattainment: cross-border pollutants.

Imperial County has an asthma rate that is off the charts, the worst in the State, probably the worst in the Nation. Asthma-related hospitalization rates are five to six times greater than the overall rate in California. This sta-

tistic is a statistic that I and many others in our community are fighting to change, but we cannot change it if we are not pushed to work with our neighbor to the south.

For that reason, I introduced the bill H.R. 4774, the FAIR Air Act, fair meaning the Foreign Air Impact Regulation, which will compel the United States at the Federal level to work more closely with our neighbors in trying to reduce air pollution. This bill says that if pollution from another country causes nonattainment of pollution regulations, EPA and the Secretary of State should work together to lower it; do not put it on the backs of the farmers and the working people in Imperial County.

My bill would direct the Secretary of State to negotiate with his or her counterparts in the foreign country to develop a plan to improve air quality. It requires EPA to deliver a report to Congress that lays out the agreed-upon binational steps with binational funding to back it up, those steps to improve the air quality in the region; and directs the EPA to take action to help the region implement the plan; and, finally, delays EPA's authority to move border air quality regions to a higher pollution nonattainment status until the previous items have been completed.

We simply cannot put this international problem on the backs of those who simply happen to live along the border. There truly needs to be a binational cooperative solution. We live in the same air shed, and we are interested in good neighborly relations.

I am fighting to help our binational communities come into compliance with air quality standards with help from both sets of governments. It is only with cooperation and working together to achieve a common goal that we can indeed reduce air pollution and keep the children in Imperial County from suffering from asthma.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 4774, the FAIR Air Act, will help to achieve that purpose. I urge my colleagues to support that bill.

INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE RULES AGAINST ISRAEL'S RIGHT TO PROTECT ITSELF

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GINGREY). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, today the so-called International Court of Justice, which I think would be better named the "International Court of Injustice," ruled against Israel putting up a security fence, which she put up in order to protect her people against suicide bombers.

No condemnation from the "International Court of Injustice" about suicide bombers and the killing of innocent civilians and the terror campaign that has been waged against Israel by

the Palestinians for the past 3 years. No talk about the children, the schoolchildren who have been blown up as they go to school on buses, or the pregnant women that have been killed because of Palestinian terror. But only, once again, a ruling condemning the State of Israel.

I do not think that any Nation, having the need to protect its citizens, would act any differently than the State of Israel in putting up this fence to keep suicide bombers out. It is hypocrisy for the International Court of Justice, it is hypocrisy for the United Nations, the hypocrisy of these countries that would have one standard for the State of Israel and one standard for every other country.

Other nations have fences, yet we hear no condemnation towards those countries from the International Court of Justice. India, Saudi Arabia, Turkey all have fences to deal with insurgencies or terrorism, but yet the very countries that condemn Israel for the same thing, we hear nary a peep from them about other countries.

The International Court of Justice should not have even heard this case. But, again, of course, they have one separate standard for the State of Israel and one separate standard for every other country.

Today's decision by the International Court of Justice is in itself a travesty of justice. The Israeli security barrier is not only protecting innocent Israeli civilians from terrorism; it is allowing Palestinians to achieve a greater degree of normalcy as Israeli checkpoints have been removed and terrorists are less able to pass through Palestinian communities.

The Prime Minister of Israel's disengagement plan endorsed by our country, the European Union, the United Nations, and Russia was based in large part on steps by Israel to achieve greater security, including the establishment of this temporary security fence. As soon as Palestinian terrorism ends, there will no longer be a need for this antiterrorism banner. The ruling of the ICJ sets back the Middle East peace process by undermining the disengagement plan and the road map.

The Israeli Supreme Court recently ruled that the security barrier is a legitimate and legal tool to prevent terror, but that there must be a balance between security and the impact on Palestinian communities. I cannot comprehend why an international tribunal has taken up and now reached a decision on a case which had already been competently handled by a national court.

Now, this decision is merely advisory. I call upon the members of the United Nations General Assembly to correct this mistake by not taking up a resolution to implement the recommendations of the International Court of Justice. If they do, the United Nations will once again show that it is not functioning the way it was intended; that instead of being an impartial group, it is leaning heavily on one